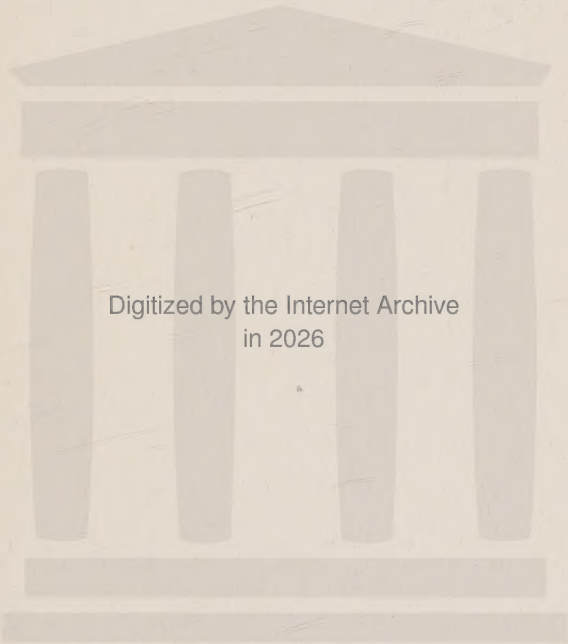
HEADQUARTERS NIGHTS

VERNON KELLOGG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Headquarters Nights

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A Record of Conversations and Experiences at the Headquarters of the German Army in France and Belgium

By Vernon Kellogg

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Vernon Kellogg graduated from the university of his native state of Kansas in 1889. After winning his master's degree, he studied at Cornell, and subsequently spent several years abroad specializing upon entomology and biology at the University of Leipzig, and considerably later at the University of Paris. For the past twenty years, he has been a professor of entomology in Stanford University, writing and lecturing on problems of life in a multitude of its most interesting and extraordinary forms.

Soon after the war broke out, Professor Kellogg, pacifist and humanitarian by conviction, obtained a furlough from his university and went abroad to devote himself to the alleviation of human suffering. It was not long before he joined his friend of long standing, Mr. Herbert Hoover, in the memorable enterprise of the Commission for the Relief of Belgium, of which he has become the official historian. In connection with this work of

civilian relief, it is worth recording that his wife, Charlotte Hoffman Kellogg, was the only woman member of that commission. Both Professor and Mrs. Kellogg spent their strength and energy to the utmost upon the cause; and in the years which preceded the inevitable intervention of the United States, it was Professor Kellogg's duty to serve during considerable periods as a sort of informal ambassador of the C. R. B., both at the Headquarters of the Great General Staff and at the Headquarters of the German Army of Occupation of Belgium. The unique opportunities given through this official yet intimate acquaintance with the German higher command and with German civilians of importance are set forth in this little book, which incidentally becomes an illuminating record of the conversion of a reasoned pacifist into a supporter of the great and necessary war.

In an article published in the Atlantic Monthly Professor Kellogg once gave a description of the surroundings in which he lived during those tense months. "The Great Headquarters," he wrote, "is quiet. The loudest sounds there come from the

playing of children in the streets. In the larger buildings of the town sit many officers over maps and dispatches. Telephones and telegraph instruments, stenographers, messengers, all the bustle of busy but quiet offices, are there. The General Staff, the General Quartermaster's group, the General Intendant's department, scores, aye, hundreds, of officers, play here the war game for Germany on the chessboard whose squares are bits of Europe.

"The small gray town is another headquarters, too; it is the great headquarters of all relief work that goes on in the North of France. Here lives, by permission and arrangement with the German staff, the American head of the neutral relief work—he and one other American who is the local head of the district including a hundred and fifty thousand people around the town. They live in a large comfortless house, and with them two German staff officers as official protectors and friendly jailers. And they, too, are part of the neutral relief work, for no man can live with it and not become part of it. It is too appealing, too gripping.

"We had seven orderlies and two chauffeurs, for we are provided with two swift gray military motors for our incessant inspecting. One of the orderlies is named cook, and he cooks, in a way. Another was a barber before he became corporal, which was convenient. And another blacked my shoes and beat my clothes in the garden with a rough stick and turned on the water full flow in our improvised bath at a given hour each morning, so that I had to get up promptly to turn it off before it flooded the whole house.

"Quite four nights of each seven in the week there were other staff officers in to dinner, and we debated such trifles as German Militarismus, the hate of the world for Germany, American munitions for the Allies, submarining and Zeppelining, the Kaiser, the German people.

"We were not all of one mind. 'Now all keep still,' demands my officer, the Hauptmann Graf W., 'and my American will tell us just what the Americans mean by German Militarismus.'

"They all kept still for the first ten words and then all broke out together:

"'No, we shall tell *you* what it is. Organization and obedience—nothing more, nothing less. It is that that makes Germany great. And it is that that you must come to if you would be a great nation.'

"I protested that I thought we are already a great nation.

"'Well, then,' they answered, 'if you would continue great. Otherwise you will smash. Democracy, bah! license, lawlessness, disruption. Organize, obey,—or smash.' And they believe it."

When the actual distribution of Belgian relief had passed out of American control, Professor Kellogg followed Mr. Hoover to his new patriotic work, and is now an important member of the organization which controls the distribution and influences the consumption of the food of one hundred millions of the American people.

FOREWORD

One of the most graphic pictures of the German attitude, the attitude which has rendered this war inevitable, is contained in Vernon Kellogg's 'Headquarters Nights.' It is a convincing, and an evidently truthful, exposition of the shocking, the unspeakably dreadful moral and intellectual perversion of character which makes Germany at present a menace to the whole civilized world.

The man who reads Kellogg's sketch and yet fails to see why we are at war, and why we must accept no peace save that of overwhelming victory, is neither a good American nor a true lover of mankind.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Sagamore Hill,
August 26, 1917.

The Headquarters of the Great General Staff

I

We do not hear much now from the German intellectuals. Some of the professors are writing for the German newspapers, but most of them are keeping silent in public. The famous Ninety-three are not issuing any more proclamations. When your armies are moving swiftly and gloriously forward under the banners of sweetness and light, to carry the proper civilization to an improperly educated and improperly thinking world, it is easier to make declarations of what is going to happen, and why it is, than when your armies are struggling for life with their backs to the wall—of a French village they have shot and burned to ruin for a reason that does not seem so good a reason now.

But some of the intellectuals still speak in the old strain in private. It has been my peculiar privilege to talk through long evening hours with a few of these men at Headquarters. Not exactly the place, one would think, for meeting these men, but let us say this for them: some of them fight as well as talk. And they fight, not simply because they are forced to, but because, curiously enough, they believe much of their talk. This is one of the dangers from the Germans to which the world is exposed: they really believe much of what they say.

A word of explanation about the Headquarters, and how I happened to be there. It was—it is no longer, and that is why I can speak more freely about it—not only Headquarters but the Great Headquarters—*Grosses Hauptquartier*—of all the German Armies of the West. Here were big Von Schoeler, *General-Intendant*, and the scholarly-

looking Von Freytag, *General-Quartiermeister*, with his unscholarly-looking, burly chief of staff, Von Zoellner. Here also were Von Falkenhayn, the Kaiser's Chief of Staff, and sometimes even the All-Highest himself, who never missed the Sunday morning service in the long low corrugated-iron shed which looked all too little like a royal chapel ever to interest a flitting French bomber.

But not only was this small gray town on the Meuse, just where the water pours out of its beautiful cañon course through the Ardennes, the headquarters of the German General Staff—it was also the station, by arrangement with the staff, of the American Relief Commission's humble ununiformed chief representative for the North of France (occupied French territory). For several months I held this position, living with the German officer detached from the General Quartermaster's staff to protect me—and

watch me. Later, too, as director of the Commission at Brussels, I had frequent occasion to visit Headquarters for conferences with officers of the General Staff. It was thus that I had opportunity for these Headquarters Nights.

Among the officers and officials of Headquarters there were many strong and keen German militaristic brains—that goes without saying—but there were also a few of the professed intellectuals—men who had exchanged, for the moment, the academic robes of the *Aula* for the field-gray uniforms of the army. The second commandant of the Headquarters town was a professor of jurisprudence at the University of Marburg; and an infantry captain, who lived in the house with my guardian officer and me, is the professor of zoölogy in one of the larger German universities, and one of the most brilliant of present-day biologists. I do not wish to indicate his person more particularly, for I shall say

some hard things about him—or about him as representative of many—and we are friends. Indeed, he was *Privat-docent* in charge of the laboratory in which I worked years ago at the University of Leipzig, and we have been correspondents and friends ever since. How he came to be at Headquarters, and at precisely the same time that I was there, is a story which has its interest, but cannot be told at present.

Our house was rather a favored centre, for 'my officer,' Graf W.— he always called me 'my American,' but he could no more get away from me than I from him—is a generous entertainer, and our dinners were rarely without guests from other headquarters houses. Officers, from veteran generals down to pink-cheeked lieutenants, came to us and asked us to them. The discussions, begun at dinner, lasted long into the night. They sat late, these German officers, over their abundant wine—French vintages

conveniently arranged for. And always we talked and tried to understand one another; to get the other man's point of view, his *Weltanschauung*.

Well, I say it dispassionately but with conviction: if I understand theirs, it is a point of view that will never allow any land or people controlled by it to exist peacefully by the side of a people governed by our point of view. For their point of view does not permit of a live-and-let-live kind of carrying on. It is a point of view that justifies itself by a whole-hearted acceptance of the worst of Neo-Darwinism, the *Allmacht* of natural selection applied rigorously to human life and society and *Kultur*.

Professor von Flussen—that is not his name—is a biologist. So am I. So we talked out the biological argument for war, and especially for this war. The captain-professor has a logically constructed argument why, for the good of the world, there should be this war,

and why, for the good of the world, the Germans should win it, win it completely and terribly. Perhaps I can state his argument clearly enough, so that others may see and accept his reasons, too. Unfortunately for the peace of our evenings, I was never convinced. That is, never convinced that for the good of the world the Germans should win this war, completely and terribly. I was convinced, however, that this war, once begun, must be fought to a finish of decision—a finish that will determine whether or not Germany's point of view is to rule the world. And this conviction, thus gained, meant the conversion of a pacifist to an ardent supporter, not of War, but of *this* war; of fighting this war to a definitive end—that end to be Germany's conversion to be a good Germany, or not much of any Germany at all. My 'Headquarters Nights' are the confessions of a converted pacifist.

In talking it out biologically, we agreed

that the human race is subject to the influence of the fundamental biologic laws of variation, heredity, selection, and so forth, just as are all other animal—and plant—kinds. The factors of organic evolution, generally, are factors in human natural evolution. Man has risen from his primitive bestial stage of glacial time, a hundred or several hundred thousand years ago, when he was animal among animals, to the stage of to-day, always under the influence of these great evolutionary factors, and partly by virtue of them.

But he does not owe all of his progress to these factors, or, least of all, to any one of them, as natural selection, a thesis Professor von Flussen seemed ready to maintain.

Natural selection depends for its working on a rigorous and ruthless struggle for existence. Yet this struggle has its ameliorations, even as regards the lower animals, let alone man.

There are three general phases of this struggle:—

1. An inter-specific struggle, or the lethal competition among different animal kinds for food, space, and opportunity to increase;

2. An intra-specific struggle, or lethal competition among the individuals of a single species, resultant on the over-production due to natural multiplication by geometric progression; and,

3. The constant struggle of individuals and species against the rigors of climate, the danger of storm, flood, drought, cold, and heat.

Now any animal kind and its individuals may be continually exposed to all of these phases of the struggle for existence, or, on the other hand, any one or more of these phases may be largely ameliorated or even abolished for a given species and its individuals. This amelioration may come about through a happy accident of time or place, or

because of the adoption by the species of a habit or mode of life that continually protects it from a certain phase of the struggle.

For example, the voluntary or involuntary migration of representatives of a species hard pressed to exist in its native habitat, may release it from the too severe rigors of a destructive climate, or take it beyond the habitat of its most dangerous enemies, or give it the needed space and food for the support of a numerous progeny. Thus, such a single phenomenon as migration might ameliorate any one or more of the several phases of the struggle for existence.

Again, the adoption by two widely distinct and perhaps antagonistic species of a commensal or symbiotic life, based on the mutual-aid principle—thousands of such cases are familiar to naturalists —would ameliorate or abolish the interspecific struggle between these two species. Even more effective in the modification

of the influence due to a bitter struggle for existence, is the adoption by a species of an altruistic or communistic mode of existence so far as its own individuals are concerned. This, of course, would largely ameliorate for that species the intra-specific phase of its struggle for life. Such animal altruism, and the biological success of the species exhibiting it, is familiarly exemplified by the social insects (ants, bees, and wasps).

As a matter of fact, this reliance by animal kinds for success in the world upon a more or less extreme adoption of the mutual-aid principle, as contrasted with the mutual-fight principle, is much more widely spread among the lower animals than familiarly recognized, while in the case of man, it has been the greatest single factor in the achievement of his proud biological position as king of living creatures.

Altruism—or mutual aid, as the biologists prefer to call it, to escape the impli-

cation of assuming too much consciousness in it—is just as truly a fundamental biologic factor of evolution as is the cruel, strictly self-regarding, exterminating kind of struggle for existence with which the Neo-Darwinists try to fill our eyes and ears, to the exclusion of the recognition of all other factors.

Professor von Flussen is Neo-Darwinian, as are most German biologists and natural philosophers. The creed of the *Allmacht* of a natural selection based on violent and fatal competitive struggle is the gospel of the German intellectuals; all else is illusion and anathema. The mutual-aid principle is recognized only as restricted to its application within limited groups. For instance, it may and does exist, and to positive biological benefit, within single ant communities, but the different ant kinds fight desperately with each other, the stronger destroying or enslaving the weaker. Similarly, it may exist to advantage within

the limits of organized human groups—as those which are ethnographically, nationally, or otherwise variously delimited. But as with the different ant species, struggle—bitter, ruthless struggle—is the rule among the different human groups.

This struggle not only must go on, for that is the natural law, but it should go on, so that this natural law may work out in its cruel, inevitable way the salvation of the human species. By its salvation is meant its desirable natural evolution. That human group which is in the most advanced evolutionary stage as regards internal organization and form of social relationship is best, and should, for the sake of the species, be preserved at the expense of the less advanced, the less effective. It should win in the struggle for existence, and this struggle should occur precisely that the various types may be tested, and the best not only preserved, but put in position to impose its kind of social organization—its

Kultur—on the others, or, alternatively, to destroy and replace them.

This is the disheartening kind of argument that I faced at Headquarters; argument logically constructed on premises chosen by the other fellow. Add to these assumed premises of the *Allmacht* of struggle and selection based on it, and the contemplation of mankind as a congeries of different, mutually irreconcilable kinds, like the different ant species, the additional assumption that the Germans are the chosen race, and German social and political organization the chosen type of human community life, and you have a wall of logic and conviction that you can break your head against but can never shatter—by headwork. You long for the muscles of Samson.

II

THE danger from Germany is, I have said, that the Germans believe what they say. And they act on this belief. Professor von Flussen says that this war is necessary as a test of the German position and claim. If Germany is beaten, it will prove that she has moved along the wrong evolutionary line, and should be beaten. If she wins, it will prove that she is on the right way, and that the rest of the world, at least that part which we and the Allies represent, is on the wrong way and should, for the sake of the right evolution of the human race, be stopped and put on the right way—or else be destroyed as unfit.

Professor von Flussen is sure that Germany's way is the right way, and that the biologic evolutionary factors

are so all-controlling in determining human destiny, that this being biologically right is certain to insure German victory. If the wrong and unnatural alternative of an Allied victory should obtain, then he would prefer to die in the catastrophe and not have to live in a world perversely resistant to natural law. He means it all. He will act on this belief. He does act on it, indeed. He opposes all mercy, all compromise with human soft-heartedness. Apart from his horrible academic casuistry and his conviction that the individual is nothing, the State all, he is a reasoning and a warm-hearted man. So are some other Germans. But for him and them the test of right in this struggle is success in it. So let every means to victory be used. The only intelligence Germans should follow in these days is the intelligence of the General Staff; the only things to believe and to repeat are the statements of the official bureau of publicity.

There is no reasoning with this sort of thing, no finding of any heart or soul in it. There is only one kind of answer: resistance by brutal force; war to a decision. It is the only argument in rebuttal comprehensible to these men at Headquarters into whose hands the German people have put their destiny.

One evening we had a larger and more distinguished dinner group than usual. The Duke of ——, a veteran of 1870 and very close to the Kaiser, altogether a personage, had come by motor with a small staff from his headquarters near the Champagne front. My officer was all of a flutter with the importance and excitement of the event. He coached all of us —orderlies, myself, and resident guests —as to our proper behavior during the visit. This was to consist chiefly of much stiff standing up, repeated formal bows, and respectful silence. No one was to start anything on his own initia-

tive. We were to take the conversational cue from His Highness. The Commandant-professor of jurisprudence was there, and a casual baron or two, and various Headquarters officers.

The duke entered, to find us a fixed row of effigies, hands on trouser-seams, eyes front, chins up, in the receiving-room. His Highness was a small bewhiskered gentleman, very abrupt and disconcerting in manner, but not at all stupid, and very ready to express his opinions on all subjects of war and church history, his hobby.

As he surveyed the row of effigies his keen eye spotted the ununiformed American, and he directed a questioning look toward Graf W., the host. My officer made a concise explanation of the situation, which the duke acknowledged with a grunt of understanding and the sharp question,—

'But does he speak German?'

Graf W. hastened to declare, '*Wie*

ein Eingeborener'—like a native—which is far from true. Another grunt of satisfaction, a critical stare of examination, and finally a direct phrase of formal recognition. I reserved any exhibition of my fluent German, and merely bowed. My officer gave me an expressive look of approval and found a later chance to congratulate me on my 'success.' I suppose not being ordered out of the room may be called success, under the circumstances.

After giving the whole row a final looking-over, His Highness mumbled something, whereupon an aide-de-camp stepped briskly up, clicked heels, and held out to him a small box containing several medals on yellow ribbons. They were the insignia of some minor order in his duchy. He presented one to one of the barons, one to the Commandant-professor of jurisprudence, and one to—my officer's chief orderly, who acted as house barber and head waiter! The

baron and professor had done their best and deepest bowing, but when Müller's turn came, it was like morning gymnastics in the bedroom. 'Touch toes ten times with finger-tips, legs remaining unbent.' I fancied that the baron and professor became less satisfied with their honor, the more Müller waxed enthusiastic. In fact, they did not put on their orders immediately; Müller did. Finally, my officer got our barber to stop bowing —the duke wasn't even seeing him— and we went into the dining-room.

At dinner the personally conducted conversation leaped suddenly from church history to Zeppelining. It was just after one of those earlier London raids, when the great city was practically defenseless, and the German newspapers had been full for several days of accounts of the enormous damage and losses of life achieved by the raid. As a matter of fact there were some horrors—not extensive but intensive horrors: women and babies in

several houses, and an omnibusful of passengers in a by-street, sickeningly mangled and murdered.

The duke declared that Zeppelining was stupid and the men who ordered it fools. The table was struck silent. A duke close to the Kaiser might say such a thing, but no less a personage. Zeppelining had been declared wise and good by the General Staff and the Berlin official publicity bureau. It was therefore wise and good. So one of the barons ventured to remonstrate. It was the one who had received his order along with Müller, and in whom the champagne had perhaps let some obscure natural feeling of resentment get the better of the well-learned feeling of proper gratitude for his dubious distinction.

'But His Highness will recall,' said the baron, 'the military advantage of Zeppelining: the value of holding guns and gunners in England which might otherwise be sent to the battle-line, and

the blowing up of munition factories, and the—ah—the terror and the—well, the military advantage generally. One must not consider the—ah—other side of the matter. A few—ah—non-combatants, perhaps, but the military advantage, that is the sole criterion.'

His Highness snorted audibly and visibly.

'That is, of course, all that one does take into consideration. It is precisely and only because there is no military advantage in Zeppelining that it is stupid and the men who order it are stupid pigs. We don't blow up any munition factories, and for every miserable woman killed, hundreds, aye, thousands of Englishmen rush into the army to come over to the front and fight us. We are doing their recruiting for them.' He fixed the squirming recipient of his yellow ribbon with a cold gray eye. 'We are all only thinking of the military advantage. What are a few—oh, pouf, why talk of it? My dear

baron, I am perhaps as much a military man as you' (this was withering scorn; the baron was the Headquarters reader of foreign newspapers!), 'and I repeat: Zeppelining is bad, and it is bad simply and entirely because it has no military advantage.'

That ended Zeppelining for the moment, until unlucky I—well, the very next subject introduced was the attitude of the neutral world, America in particular, toward Germany. The newspaper-reading baron suddenly turned to me.

'Why is this universal hate of Germany? Why do you Americans hate us?'

It was too soon after what I had just heard. I blurted out,—

'For things like the military advantage of Zeppelining.'

My officer gave a scrape and a lurch; something tipped over. Then he stared —all of us stared—at the duke. His Highness did not order me to the firing squad or even to the cells. He did noth-

ing, said nothing, to show any displeasure. He looked steadily and thoughtfully at me, and then gruffly indicated his pleasure that the company should rise from the table. My officer recovered his color and his equanimity.

I believe that His Highness knew that answer all the time. But the rest did not, and they do not understand it now. 'Military advantage,' 'military expediency'—how often have these phrases blocked us of the Relief Commission in our efforts in Belgium and North France! No mercy, no 'women-and-children' appeals, no hesitation to use the torch and the firing squad, deportation, and enslavement. And it is all a part of Professor von Flussen's philosophy; the pale ascetic intellectual and the burly, red-faced butcher meet on common ground here. And then they wonder why the world comes together to resist this philosophy—and this butchery—to the death!

III

LATE one afternoon we left Headquarters to dine with General von R. down near the Champagne front. Mr. Hoover, Chairman of the Commission, and Mr. White, of its London office, had come over to Brussels and on to Headquarters for a conference in connection with our work in Northern France; and so we were all to go with my officer and two or three other men of the General Staff to receive this special attention from a commanding general at the front.

We made an imposing procession in three big gray military cars running swiftly to the south. As the general's chief of staff, who had come to Headquarters to escort us personally, spoke no English and did not like to hear English spoken, he took me alone with

him in his car. He was a taciturn, crusty major, with a thin, stern face and tight lips.

His first remarks were certain direct questions about conditions in London and England. I could reply only that, if such questions were asked me in England about Germany or German-occupied territory, I would not answer them. He did not like it, but after a little bullying settled into moody silence, occasionally broken by curt remarks to me, and brutally put instructions to his soldier chauffeur. It was evident that he did not like the idea of his general's showing this high courtesy to the intruding Yankees. It was not a pleasant excursion for any of us, and yet it was a beautiful two hours' ride over smooth tree-lined roads—the trees are mostly gone now—through picturesque country of wide outlooks.

Just at dusk we climbed slowly up a gentle hill-slope. As we reached the flat

summit and sped along over it, one could see the road stretching far ahead, a gently irregular white line dipping out of sight into a valley in front, but reappearing on the farther up-slope and running there straight away into invisibility. Just at the horizon, where the hilltop met the heavens and the road disappeared, the tower of a little church silhouetted itself against the darkening blue of the evening sky.

'This is the road to Rheims,' muttered my companion. 'You can see it from that church.'

I thrilled. The road to Rheims! Rheims just there in front, and a shell bursting over it—over the Cathedral, say—could be seen from that little church. I wanted to go right on along that white line to that hilltop.

Later I really did go there, and beyond it even to the very verge of the sad city itself. There is an extraordinary little village of cellars—the houses above

are mere stone-heaps—just behind the German trenches in front of Rheims. These cellars are occupied by two hundred and thirty-three women and girls, sixty-seven children, and four tottering old men, the total remaining population of a once picturesque and crowded village. We wanted them to come away and be housed farther back from the line. But they prefer to live 'at home.' And so we have fed these women and children there two years. They live in their cellars, with the shells moaning back and forth over them whenever there is 'desultory artillery firing before Rheims.'

As we were running swiftly over the flat hill-summit with the long view in front of us, our driver, without being instructed—and cursed—by the major, suddenly slowed the car, and I noted the major staring hard at a soldier's grave by the roadside. There had been hard fighting all about here and the graves were numerous along the way. My

companion turned abruptly to me, with a thumb-jerk toward the grave.

'He was my best friend,' he said gruffly; and with another jerk to the front, he added, 'And my brother lies under the shadows of that church-tower there on the hill.'

I forgave him his gruffness.

Arrived at the general's headquarters in a French industrial town now half in ruins, we walked by a stiff row of orderlies into a spacious house, and were shown by other orderlies and a young lieutenant to an upstairs room to brush off the white chalk-dust of the Champagne road. My officer had remained below. Suddenly he came into our room, excited and with a face of much concern. He told us swiftly that a translation of President Wilson's latest note, a short and sharp one, had just been telephoned to the general from Berlin. And the general and everybody downstairs were violently incensed. He wondered whether one of us had not

better get suddenly ill, so that we should have to go back at once without staying for dinner.

This seemed absurd. We said that the general could get ill and call off the dinner if he wanted to, but we should not. Poor Graf W.! He had been trained to abuse his subordinates and cringe before his superiors, and it was really a horrible position for him; he felt, in a way, responsible for his Yankees, and he wanted the occasion to go off pleasantly. However, we had not written the note, or done anything except come, with no anticipations of pleasure, to eat dinner with the general! And so we insisted on going down.

It was a strenuous meal, not because of an overabundance of things to eat —it is a long time now since there has been too much to eat in Germany, even among generals—but because of the situation. The general and his staff were always polite, but never more than

that. They were perfectly correct and perfectly reserved. We talked much and said little. The general declared an interest in 'caring for the people.' He was trying to reëstablish the industries of the region, he said. I had noted the stacks of two factories smoking as we entered the town. Such sights in Belgium and North France have been unusual for two years, and attract attention. I said we were very glad to learn of his interest, and asked what the factories were. He turned to the gentleman on his other side. But a less discerning young officer across the table said they were making corrugated iron. This is an article much used in and behind the trenches.

There is also much cutting of trees —French trees—and sawing of lumber going on in occupied France. Wood is also much used in the trenches. And large herds of cattle are being pastured in French pastures. They are German cattle for the soldiers. The French cat-

tle have long ago been eaten by them.

I suppose all this is just war. But when such things are given the color before the world of 'restoring the industries of the people,' the specific object of this restoration should be told. The bald truth is that Governor von Bissing's repeated declarations of rehabilitating industries in Belgium, and the similar statements of the General Staff for Northern France, are equivocations. What has been strongly attempted has been a forced exploitation of the people for German military advantage. It has been resisted by the simple but brave and patriotic workingmen of the occupied territories with a success that seems incredible in the face of the guns and deporting trains all too familiar to them. It is true, as has been said in criticism of them, that the Belgians do not work. They have little work of their own that they can do, and they will not work for the

Germans. That is one of the reasons for the deportations, which have been, by the way, one of the greatest of German blunders—and brutalities—in this war. But I must not write of Belgium now; Headquarters was in Northern France.

It was not all sticking at Headquarters. I traveled—always with my officer, of course—up and down and across and back over all of occupied France; from Lille to Longwy, from Coucy-le-Château to Charleville. For the purposes of our *ravitaillement* the occupied French territory is divided into six districts. These corresponded with no political subdivisions of the country, as *départements* and *arrondissements*, but were determined chiefly by the original disposition of the German armies, each of which, having a certain degree of autonomy as regards the region occupied by it, objected to any movement of French feeding committees and our own

American Commission representatives across the borders of its own region. We had, therefore, six district *ravitaillement* centres, or headquarters, at each of which were stationed one or two of our representatives, who moved about more or less freely in his district, each with a specially detailed German officer of his own—'nurses,' we called them. It was my privilege and duty as chief representative, and my officer's as chief of the officer group, to visit occasionally each of the districts.

We traveled by military motor, my officer and I in the tonneau, and a soldier chauffeur and an orderly in the driver's seat, each of them with a loaded Mauser held erect in clamps by his side. In each side-flap pocket of the tonneau was a loaded Browning. We were never shot at, nor did we ever shoot at anybody, but the armament gave the proper military tone to our equipage. We ran frightfully fast, and

I always had the uneasy feeling that I should find my finish in North France, not in a dramatic erasure by a stray shell or casual bomb from overhead, but in a commonplace motor smash-up. As it came out, the only casualties attending our 5000 or more kilometres of mad running were among the few remaining half-fed chickens of the French villagers. We did once rather narrowly miss being run over by the Crown Prince, who sat on the front seat with an orderly, and drove his own car like a hurricane. As he swerved slightly to miss us, he intrusted his life—and ours—to one of his hands, while with the other he gave us a débonnaire salute.

This extraordinary touring of North France came finally to get strongly on my nerves. It is such a sad land; such a wreck of half-destroyed villages and crumbled farm-houses, of stripped woodland and neglected fields. And the people: all women and children and old

and infirm men! And the meagerness of the food-supply, despite the best we could do! We meant much to these people, we eight or ten Americans moving about among them; at least, they gave us unmistakably to understand that we did. We represented the sympathy and endeavor of a great nation far away. Cut off as these imprisoned French are from all communication with their fighting men across the terrible trench-lines; cut off even from communication with each other, if only a few miles apart, we exemplified the freedom that still existed somewhere, and the hope of the freedom to come to them again. And we meant, too, for them, the holding back of the spectre of actual starvation.

The sights and the incidents of those trips are too harrowing to exploit. They are untellable, intimate memories for us, but they went far in making us convinced and bitter believers that the only comprehensible answer to the German

philosophy of '*raison d'État*,' and 'military exigency,' to these ravages of non-combatant countryside and village, is an answer of force. Not that we wish to do to them what they have done to others, but to prevent them by force from ever doing that again.

I could understand why the villages along the Meuse were shot to pieces; there was real fighting there—at least in some of them. And there were some more whose names I recalled as associated with the desperate retreating struggles of the overwhelmed French and British. But there are many, many others in which there was no fighting, but just destroying. They have not been enumerated as have the Belgian towns; they have no sad fame in the ears of the world: they are just nameless scores of illustrations and results of the German conception of the struggle for existence as a contributory factor in the evolution of human kind.

There is, I suppose, a slight military advantage in so maltreating and terrifying a conquered land that only a few elderly Landsturmers, scattered here and there over it, are sufficient as an army of occupation. The rest of the Landsturmers can be used in the trenches. But it is a terrible price—of something—to pay for this alleged military advantage.

I used to ask my officer about these wrecked villages as we ran through them, or stopped to inspect a local distributing centre, or watch a soup-line, or get a report, and always a piteous request, from a feeding committee. He had a stereotyped reply: 'Punishment.'

'Punishment for what?'

'For a civilian's shooting at a soldier; or the village's harboring a spy; or a failure to meet a requisition; or something or other.'

He never knew exactly; nobody ever knew exactly; and I do not know exactly. Not even with all the explana-

tion from the captain-professor, who explained it on a basis of biological philosophy. Nor with the explanation of the non-philosophizing fighters, who simply said that it was necessary as a military advantage. Nor with the explanation of my officer, who, when I continued to press him, would make an ugly screwing gesture with closed fist, which seemed to mean, 'Just do it to them!'

I went into Northern France and Belgium to act as a neutral, and I did act as a neutral all the time I was there. If I learned there anything of military value which could be used against the Germans I shall not reveal it. But I came out no neutral. Also I went in an ardent hater of war and I came out a more ardent one. I have seen that side of the horror and waste and outrage of war which is worse than the side revealed on the battlefield. How I hope for the end of all war!

But I have come out believing that that cannot come until any people which has dedicated itself to the philosophy and practice of war as a means of human advancement is put into a position of impotence to indulge its belief at will. My conviction is that Germany is such a people, and that it can be put into this position only by the result of war itself. It knows no other argument and it will accept no other decision.

Von Bissing's Headquarters

I

TWENTY years ago the Samoan Islands belonged to England, Germany, and the United States. The Gordian knot of trouble inevitably tied by such a handling of Samoan affairs had its cutting hastened by the famous hurricane of 1889, which piled up some men-of-war of the ruling nations on the vicious coral reefs of Apia harbor, and drove others in safety out to sea.

This terrible common experience made temporary friends of the struggling English, German, and American sailors and Samoan boatmen, who had all been mutual enemies. It also helped to hasten the arrangement by which England exchanged her interests in Samoa for another South Sea *quid pro quo*, and the four principal islands were divided between Germany

and America, two to each. The Germans got Savaii with its volcano and Upolu with its cocoanut groves, while we got beautiful Tutuila with its harbor and little Manua without much of anything.

The money in use in Upolu, and in its chief town, Apia, had been, for years, English money, its lesser pieces known to the natives as 'shillins' (accent on the second syllable), 'seese-a-pennies,' and 'kolu-pennies,' *kolu* being the native word for three. When the Germans took full possession of Upolu, they, of course, introduced their own currency. But the natives persisted in calling a silver mark a 'shillin,' and a fifty-pfennig piece a 'seese-a-penny.' A mark looked like a shilling and it bought no more or less of anything than a shilling; the same with fifty-pfennigs and six-pence. Why new names, then?

But though the natives persisted, the Germans insisted. The Governor of German Samoa—now head of a great de-

partment of the Imperial German Government at Berlin—gave much time and energy to trying to change 'shillin' to mark. But he never succeeded. So with a host of other trivial things. He could tell a German to say this for that, or do that for this, and it was said and done; why not a Samoan? He could not understand it. Apparently no German can understand it.

So it has been in all the other one-time German colonies. And so it has been in Belgium.

Governor-General von Bissing died from too much telling the Belgians to do things—some important, many trivial—and too much trying to make them do them. He fumed and worried and suffered because they would not behave properly. Why would they not? Why should not Belgians be managed as Germans are managed? Why would they not? He died unenlightened. He had a large staff of subordinates: department

heads, provincial governors, and what not. None of them enlightened him. None of them could enlighten him. I almost believe that no German could.

Von Bissing is dead and Von Falkenhausen has stepped into his shoes, and is going on trying to rule Belgium in the same way. But he will succeed no better. He will never know the Belgians, as Solf did not know the Samoans, and the statesmen and rulers of Germany do not know the English, or the French, or the Americans. How often have I been asked, angrily, pathetically, always insistently, 'Why do you Americans do as you do? Germans would not.'

At first I tried to explain. But they could not understand. Some few understood that they did not understand, but even they could not understand why they did not, why they could not. I say some few; really I remember only one. He was a business man of proved capacity. For the moment, he was in an officer's uni-

form and head of an important department of Von Bissing's government; a man of good mind, and university-trained. Most of the German officers and officials are men of good mind and university-trained.

He said, 'You say we can't understand other people, their minds, their points of view, their feelings. Look at us in South America. Our traders were getting the best of the English traders and your own keen Yankee traders. We understood better than you the wants and business methods of the South Americans. We made the goods the way they wanted them made; we packed them the way they wanted them packed; we gave them credit in the way they preferred to have it. We were more adaptable than either you or the British. But—yes, it is true, our statesmen do not understand your statesmen or your people; our diplomats do not understand the people to whom we send them. Everything you

do surprises them, disappoints them, dismays them. And we lose by it. We suffer by it. What is the reason?'

But he was the only one I remember out of the many I talked with who understood that they did not understand. And he himself did not really understand that he did not understand the Belgians whom he was helping to govern! He thought they were just insolent liars and rebels! Yes, because they did not do, if they could help it at all, whatever and everything the Germans ordered them to do, they were 'rebels.'

Had not the German army beaten their army and occupied their land? Well, then, were they not rebels and traitors if they did not do things that the Germans told them to do, and did things that they were told not to do? Could they not learn to behave properly after having to have thousands of their civilian citizens and their women and children shot in groups at the beginning, and hundreds

shot scatteringly along through the wearying months, and other hundreds sent to prison in Germany?

'Idiots and ingrates, these Belgians.' I use the word actually as used to me: ingrates. For had not His Excellency, Governor-General von Bissing, expressed in a score or more of proclamations his own interest and the interest of the Imperial German Government in the welfare of the people? Had His Excellency not actively displayed this interest by tangible things done for their advantage?

I studied earnestly for a moment, but I had to ask for help. 'What things, for example?' I asked.

'Well'—he studied too for a moment; then triumphantly, 'Well, for example, the reëstablishment of the Flemish university at Ghent. You ought to remember that, for I heard His Excellency tell you that you could lecture there.'

I remember that saturnine jest. General von Bissing had reëstablished the

old Flemish university at Ghent just as General von Beseler reëstablished the old Polish university at Warsaw—recently closed, by the way. In Poland this was a slap at Russophil Poles; in Belgium, a slap at the ruling Walloons. Von Bissing had arranged for fifty professors, some German, some Dutch, and a few renegade and bribable Flemish, to accept chairs at Ghent. The bribe for these men was a good immediate salary and a pension for life after cessation—for cause—of teaching.

That cessation will come the minute that Belgium is free again, and the cause will be a swift flight from the country. For not one of these renegade Flemish professors can live in Belgium after the Germans go out, nor even anywhere within reach of Belgian vengeance. They will urgently need their pensions.

With a grand flourish—but an all-German flourish—the reëstablished Flemish university at Ghent opened with fifty

professors—and forty students! These students will need pensions, too.

My companion's remark about the Governor-General's offer to let me lecture at Ghent had reference to a grim jest on the part of His Excellency. I had acted for a few months in 1915 as the Relief Commission's director in Brussels, on leave from my university in California, but had had to return for the second half of the college year. This finished, I went back, at Mr. Hoover's request, to take up the directorship again. Soon after my arrival in Brussels, I made my call of formality on Von Bissing, in company with the German head of the department having chief cognizance of our relief work.

The Governor-General received me not unkindly, in his stiffly pleasant manner, and said he hoped I would not have to leave again while the relief work went on, adding that, if I felt once more the need of giving some university lectures,

I might give a course in the new university at Ghent!

It was meant as a jest, but, as he knew as well as I did what fate was in reserve for the lecturers in his new university, it had a grimness that made his smile, under the stiff clipped mustache, no less awry than mine. I had a horrible temptation, fortunately resisted, to return jest for jest by asking the figure of my pension.

All this great and affectionate interest in matters and people Flemish, exhibited by General von Bissing and his staff, and by the German Chancellor and his Berlin associates, and now by Von Schaibele, the new special sub-governor for Flemish Belgium, is so simple and obvious in its reason and intent that it is nothing short of astounding that any Germans, 'of good mind and university-trained,' can, for a moment, believe that it could fool any one, least of all the people most immediately concerned. The naïveté of the whole performance is simply pathetic.

To hire a few cheap Flemings to come to Berlin and do a stage chat with the chancellor, and have their pictures taken in a top-hatted group with him, and then expect to palm off this infantile performance as evidence of German and Flemish-Belgian *rapprochement*, is to betray a simplicity that is past conception. Copies of that group photograph, as published in *Die Woche*, are being religiously kept by hundreds of Belgians as evidence, when the time comes, on which to hang these paid Flemish renegades. I hope that they, like the professors, have been pensioned, and have reserved future lodgings in the heart of Germany. They will be safe nowhere else—perhaps not there.

That is the simple, naïve side of German rule. There is another and fearfully contrasting side. It is the side of blood and iron. And Belgium has had full measure of laughable and tragic experience of both sides. Her keen wits have often bested the rule of naïveté—by pay-

ing a fine; her bravest hearts have often bested the rule of brutality—by paying their lives. No week has passed in all the many since Germany violated her own honor, and that of Belgium, three years ago, without a new *Verordnung* placarded on the hoardings, prescribing some trivial doing or not doing,—which meant smiles and shrugs and quick little schemes of avoidance to the reading Belgians; nor has a week passed without some grim court-martial running its fated course of judicial travesty—which meant imprisonment or death to some devoted woman or brave man of Belgium.

Some woman or some man, do I say? Some tens or twenties of women and men, I ought to say. The trials and condemnations at Hasselt alone are of scores at a time.

II

THE German government of Belgium is three fourths strictly military and one fourth quasi-civil. There is a *Civil-Verwaltung*, or department of civil government; a *Politische Abteilung*, or 'political' department, having to do with the diplomatic and general political relation of the government to the Belgian people generally, and the Belgian and American relief organizations specially; a *Bank-Abteilung*, whose most conspicuous activities have had relation to the forced removal of 450,000,000 marks from the vaults of two great Belgian banks to those of the Reichsbank in Berlin, and the putting of proper pressure on all the Belgian banks to produce the huge monthly indemnity, first of forty million francs, then fifty, and now sixty, that is

collected from Belgium by Germany; a *Press-Abteilung*, presided over by a capable sculptor, which looks after the editing of all the Belgian newspapers—except *La Libre Belgique!*—a *Vermittlungsstelle*, or special bureau of the political department, through which all negotiations of the Belgian Comité National and the American Commission with the German government, either in Brussels or Berlin, are taken up; a Central Harvest Commission (*Central Ernte Kommission*), with special charge of the native food-crops and live stock (horses excepted); and last, but very far from least, the Military 'Intendance,' which represents the army's interests and control.

In addition to these various chief departments—and I may have overlooked one or two; it does not matter—there is a series of bureaus or organizations of lesser rank, called *Centrale*, which take special cognizance and charge of different

kinds of local foodstuffs and related commodities.

The Central Harvest Commission ought, perhaps, more properly to be listed as the first and most important of this group, rather than among the chief departments as noted above. It is composed of five German officials representing, respectively, the Governor-General himself, the civil department, the bank department, the political department, and the military department, and a Belgian representing the Comité National, and an American representing the Relief Commission. The Belgian and American members were tolerated rather than welcomed, and their voices, although heard, rarely carried conviction to the already unanimously convinced German members. They had, however, full voting privilege, but the minutes of the bi-monthly meetings—solemn, formal affairs with an occasional relieving glimpse of uncovered feeling and humanness—record a monot-

onous list of motions carried by five voices to two, and other motions lost by two to five!

There are, in addition to the principal Harvest Commission, a barley central; an oats central, wholly in military hands; a sugar central; a general fats and oils central, with a special butter central; a vegetables central, with special potato and chicory centrals; a brandy central, for the controlling and taxing of all alcoholic production, this alcohol coming chiefly from the yeast factories; and, finally, a coal central, which, oddly enough, controls the fertilizers as well as coal.

I may also have overlooked a central or two; but, again, it doesn't matter. There were enough, if not too many; enough, that is, to give a very plausible seeming of what one expects from German organization, namely, careful and meticulous specialization and subdivision of labor, responsibility, and authority, but

all tied together and subject to the superior understanding and direction.

At a distance, the German government of Belgium seems admirably organized and even well managed. At close range, especially at the close range of personal contact and experience, it reveals itself as absurdly over-organized and inefficiently managed. The German government of Belgium has proved itself incapable, except in those matters where results were got by sheer brutal force alone—and in these the force has been too often used blindly as well as brutally—and has never satisfied the Germans themselves, either in Belgium or in Berlin. This is a statement that I can make with confidence and without breach of confidence. For it is well known in Holland, which sees and knows by one means or another practically all that goes on in Belgium and Germany.

Governor-General von Bissing wished to gain a certain measure of Belgian ap-

proval of his administration of the country. His first approval, naturally, should come from Berlin; his second, from Germany; his third, if there could be anything for Belgians to approve of what must first be commended by Berlin and Germany, was to come from Belgium. And he really wanted this approval.

Hopeless cynics might explain his desire simply as dictated by pure personal selfishness and ambition. A successful civil administration should receive some measure of approval from the administered. Von Bissing's government was always a quasi-civil government. He would commend himself and his administration to his over-lords if things went fairly quietly in Belgium. But he would not if Berlin's already fatigued ears had to be assaulted by the disquieting rattle of machine-guns in the streets of Brussels and Antwerp, and the screams, groans, and last sobbing coughs of the dying Bruxellois and Anversois. The world seemed in-

clined to give a too attentive ear to noises from Belgium, and Berlin's own ears, usually only too deaf to the cries of the tortured, had become, by virtue of this fact, a little sensitive also to sounds from Brussels. It is a popular belief that Berlin cares not a rap for the world outside. But this is not true. She does care, and does not at all relish being so continually and distressfully 'misunderstood.' What is true is that it is only with the utmost difficulty, and only rarely, that Berlin can understand what the reaction of the world outside is going to be to German behavior. I believe that it is chiefly this limitation that is leading Germany to defeat and near-destruction.

But I am not a hopeless cynic—to get back to the matter of General von Bissing's rather pathetic desire for Belgian approval. And I think that the past governor's wish was based partly on less questionable grounds than pure selfishness. He had in some degree a feeling of

personal responsibility for the five million or more human bodies and souls, nameless and hardly distinguishable to him, with social traditions and natural inheritance utterly uncomprehended by him, which had, by the inexplicable hazards of human fate, been thrust, willy-nilly, into his hands. It would be a bit too supermannish not to feel a little anxious, for the people's own sake, about the fate of individuals in such a mass of people, hanging ever on the verge of starvation and kept from literal destruction only by the interference of an incomprehensible foreign neutral organization.

But, some way, for whatever Governor von Bissing was able to do, there was not approval enough to go around. After Berlin and Germany had approved, there was never any to come from Belgium. In the face of what he did, or allowed to be done, how in the name of humanity, of honor, and of what there is of God in man, could there be?

And so the Germans in Belgium have been an ostracized people. The Belgians on the streets look another way as they pass the spurred, field-gray officers. The German soldiers have learned to ride on the platforms of the tramcars; it is less chilling there than inside. The few open hotels and shops have become differentiated into places for Germans and places for Belgians. It is an odd victory that these conquered people win over their conquerors every day.

For the Germans feel it. They have wanted friendly civil treatment from the Belgians; they have tried in their uncomprehending, unsympathetic, stiffly patronizing, semi-contemptuous way to get it, and they have expected it. Indeed, it was more than civility, it was deference that they first expected—in parts of occupied France the people have to salute the German officers or get shot—but when the deference was seen to be hopeless, they expected civility.

Well, they have not got it; they have not had it. And this complete withholding of Belgian approval of the German administration, and the complete lack of any personal *rapprochement* between German officers and officials and Belgians during the long period of enforced relationship and companionship, is, to me, vivid evidence of two things: Belgian spirit, and German mal-administration and utter lack of human consideration of the people and persons they are ruling and professing to be trying to placate, befriend, and elevate. For the Belgians are no more than human, and human consideration would inevitably have had its usual effect in some visible measure.

This condition is also a sufficient proof, if the world needs further proof, of the utter inability of the Germans to help the world in its efforts to humanize and socialize and lift up its peoples. Even were German *Kultur* that most desirable thing that the German intellectuals have said

it is—and that most of us are convinced it is not—the Germans are utterly unable to make it over to any other people. The Ninety-Three Intellectuals were quite sure that Germany could spread and bestow its *Kultur* on the backward nations of the earth by conquering them by arms. But *Kultur* cannot be imposed on a people, even though its rule can. The Belgians are ruled by German *Kultur*, but they are not penetrated by it.

From the depths of their bleeding hearts they execrate it. They have seen what it does to a people—to two peoples, the Germans and themselves. It makes brutes and martyrs: brutes of its possessors, martyrs of those who come in contact with its possessors. German *Kultur* stifles the good in man for the good of a man-made Juggernaut called the State.

Whatever headway any German singly might have been able to make in gaining the tolerance or friendship of

the Belgians—and there have been and are to-day individual Germans in Belgium of a certain warmth of heart and human sympathy—this man, as member of the German administrative organization in Belgium, was no longer 'any German singly,' but a nameless, individualless, rigid little cog on one of the myriad wheels of the Great German Machine. He could move only as his wheel moved, which in turn moved—or should move—only in perfect relation to the moving of the other wheels.

This 'any German singly' gave up, in all matters in which he acted as a part of the German administration, all of the thinking, all of the feeling, all of the conscience which might be characteristic of him as an individual, a free man, a separate soul made sacred by the touch of the Creator. And he did this to accept the control and standards of an impersonal, intangible, inhuman, great cold fabric made of logic and casuistry and

utter, utter cruelty, called the State—or often, for purposes of deception, the Fatherland. There *is* fatherland in Germany, but it is not the German State. It is German soil and German ancestry, but not the horrible, depersonalized, super-organic state machine, built and managed by a few ego-maniacs of incredible selfishness and of utter callousness to the sufferings, bodily and mental, of their own as well as any other people in their range of contact.

But this machine is a Frankenstein that will turn on its own creators and work their destruction, together with its own. Such sacrifice and stultification of human personality as national control by such a machine requires, can have no permanence in a world moving certainly, even if hesitatingly and deviously, toward individualism and the recognition of personal values.

III

THE experience of our Relief Commission with this machine has been wearing. It has also been illuminating. For it has resulted in the conversion of an idealistic group of young Americans of open mind and fairly neutral original attitude, into a band of convinced men, most of whom, since their forced retirement from Belgium, have ranged themselves among four armies devoted to the annihilation of that machine and to the rescue and restoration of that one of its victims, the sight of whose mangling and suffering brought unshed tears to the eyes and silent curses to the lips of these Americans so often during the long two and a half years of the relief work.

We were not haters of Germany when we went to Belgium. We have simply,

by inescapable sights and sounds and knowledge forced on us, been made into what we have become. If we hate Prussians and Prussianism now, it is because Prussia and Prussianism have taught us to hate them. Whom have they ever taught to love them?

The work of the Relief Commission was carried on under a series of guaranties given by the succeeding German governors-general, the Berlin Foreign Office, and the Great General Staff of the German armies. These guaranties committed the German authorities, from the beginning of the work, to the non-requisition of the food-supplies imported into Belgium and to non-interference with our distribution of these supplies. Later they included the non-requisition of the food-stuffs produced within the country, and the non-purchase of these native crops for the use of the German army. Also they contained the positive promise that the Commission should en-

joy all reasonable facilities to do its beneficent work and to be able to satisfy itself that the guaranties as to non-requisition and purchase were strictly lived up to.

In general these guaranties have been maintained; the one respecting the non-requisition of the imported supplies in particular has been scrupulously regarded. Of course, if it had not been, the work would have stopped abruptly at the moment of its disregard. But in detail, in the relationship with German officialdom and German soldiery, made necessary in the carrying on of the work, difficult in itself under the most favorable circumstances, we were harassed and delayed and tricked and bullied in a thousand ways, but almost always under cover of a sophisticated and specious reasoning. A German official is no less plausible than brutal. There was always a protracted debate, a delaying argument, an exasperating show of consideration and conference, whenever we protested and pleaded and de-

manded that our work be not interfered with.

The dying of children, the weakening of women and men, the advance of disease, were not arguments that we could push forward to our advantage; there was always a convenient 'military exigency' to put these summarily out of court. The argument had to turn on the form of words in the guaranties; this was susceptible of debate, this was a matter to consider.

The machine seemed to have a curious regard for our 'scraps of paper' except when it was more convenient to disregard them entirely, which was not often, although always possible. In this respect we were constantly surprised, having always in mind the original notorious scrap-of-paper incident. Perhaps the machine has become a little sensitive to paper troubles.

A prolific source of difficulty for us was the lack of clear demarcation among the

many wheels and parts of the machine, and a lack of coördination among these bits of mechanism. But sharp specialization and thorough coördination are generally supposed to be exactly the basis of the reputed high organization and efficiency of the German government. Be that true of all the rest of German administration or not, I do not know; I only know it is not true of German administration in Belgium. A difficulty over the movement of canal boats; over the censoring and transmission of our necessary mails between the Brussels central offices and the provinces; over the circulation of our workers and their motor-cars; over the printing and posting of our protecting placards on warehouses and railway wagons; or over what not else—it made no difference. Never was there a well-defined course of procedure for us; never could we quickly find the proper department of the government to which to apply and from which to obtain decision in any

of these and the many other cases of trouble.

It was indeed precisely because of this constant uncertainty, and a final recognition of the difficulty by Governor-General von Bissing, that there was finally established—just a year after the relief work was begun—the *Vermittlungsstelle*, to which all our troubles were first to be referred, to be in turn passed on by it into the whirring interior of the creaking machine, there to be whirled around until some kind of final or provisional decision was ejected.

But these interior processes of digestion and resynthesis—for what went in always came out in a different form—took time, and time too often freighted with awful significance to the helpless, waiting, hungering Belgians. But the machine took little account of human suffering, or human lives, even. It took the time that its incapacity made necessary, and turned out its work in the in-

complete or distorted form that its clumsiness assured. This must seem, in the face of the popular conception of German administrative organization, like unconsidered and exaggerated writing. But it is not. It is the revelation of simple truth.

Under whatever detailed guaranties, or on the basis of no matter how elaborate regulations, an inevitable requirement for the carrying on of our work was a certain element of trust by the German authorities in the correct behavior of our American workers. The struggle between German officialdom's need for an absolute control of us, because any or all of us were potential spies —we were, of course—and the impossibility, under existing circumstances, of establishing any such effective control, resulted in a state of affairs that was ludicrous when it was not too irritating to be anything else.

The control was attempted by a rigor-

ous set of restrictive rules concerning the movements of the Americans and their cars, prohibitions against carrying any letters except certain censored official ones, and a careful reissuing of passes each month for all of the men connected with the relief work. Our compliance with these regulations was checked on all motor trips by a regular inspection of passes, including the special ones of chauffeur and motor, a recording of the movement of the car, and sometimes an examination of the contents of bag and pockets, at all the sentry posts scattered along the roads. These posts were so abundant in the early days—when there were soldiers to spare—that we would be stopped a dozen times between Brussels and Antwerp, less than a two-hour trip. In addition to the regular inspection, there was another irregular one, which consisted of the sudden halting of the car any day anywhere along the road by a group of military-secret-service men, who made a close examination, not

only of passes and papers, but of cars and persons. The cars would be fairly taken to pieces, tires deflated and searched, and gasoline tanks fished in. The examination of the clothing and bodies of our men was no less thorough—and more disgusting.

Now all this was good control to prevent—what? It prevented our carrying any persons unauthorized to travel by motor, or any dangerous information in letters, from one part of Belgium to another—from Brussels to Antwerp, say. But these possible would-be travelers could go without hindrance or examination from Brussels to Antwerp by any one of several trains a day, or by a combination of tram-lines and buses, or on foot. What they might not do was to joy-ride! And if we wished to carry any dangerous information we certainly should not have confided it to letters, but should simply have taken it as told us or discovered by us, and made it over to whomever we cared to, provided he could understand

our kind of French. We were allowed—the circumstances of the work made it absolutely necessary, as the German authorities recognized—to talk when and where and to whom we pleased.

More than this and much more important than this, we sent out—with the consent, of course, of the Germans—three times a week, a mail courier from Brussels through the electrified wire fence and across the Belgian frontier into Holland. The mails he carried had been censored and sealed—the seals to be examined at the frontier—and he was subject to search, regular and irregular, at any time before reaching the wire. But he was a very intelligent young man, who spoke French, German, Flemish, Dutch, and English, and when in Holland was free to tell any one there—and Holland's population is, at present, most interestingly cosmopolitan—or write to any one anywhere—to a man in England, say, with an interest in matters in Belgium—anything

he pleased. In Holland he had but one control—his honor. And there was an alternate courier with this same privilege, and several others of us had to go out often to Holland. Mr. Hoover and myself went back and forth often—Mr. Hoover very often and more or less regularly—between London and Belgium. In other words, if we could not be trusted, there was absolutely no hindrance in the German scheme of control to our conveying information at any time to the enemy. And yet the exercise of the absurd control attempted was evidence that we were not trusted. The repeated personal examinations, carefully planned to catch any guilty one off his guard, outraged our sense of honor—and decency. The whole situation might well have stimulated a man to accept the implication of dishonesty which it placed on him as a recognition that he might spy, if he could get away with it! All this absurd pseudo-control was stupid in the psychology that dictated it, and stupid in

the method of its carrying out. It was inexpedient and inefficient.

And it was unnecessary. We were not spies, and the German officials knew it. If we were, or if they really thought we were, their only sensible and safe action would have been to remove us. But knowing that we were not spying—in a few cases in which some over-eager 'flat-foot' thought he had found proof that we were, we were able brilliantly to prove the contrary—they nevertheless treated us in a way to make us feel and seem suspect, though not in a way which would have prevented us from spying and informing had we really been inclined to. That is machinery, but not brains. And wheels can never really replace brain-cells in human functioning.

IV

However, a pacifist, or a neutral, is hardly to be made into an adherent of a war against any people on the basis of being ever so convinced of the stupidity of that people's form of government, or because of an ego-maniacal overestimate, on the part of this people, of its form of *Kultur*. And it was something more than any conviction of this kind that turned our group of American neutrals in German-occupied Belgium and North France into a shocked, then bitter, and finally blazing, band of men wishing to slay or be slain, if necessary, to prevent the repetition anywhere of the things they had to see done in these tortured lands.

The Germans entered Belgium in August and September, 1914; we began to

come in November. Hence we saw none of the 'atrocities' of the invasion—we saw only results of them. Among these results, as seen by us, were, I hasten to say, no women without breasts or children without hands. But there were women without husbands and sons and daughters, and children without mothers and fathers. There were families without homes, farms without cattle or horses or houses, towns without town halls and churches and most of the other buildings, and even some without any buildings at all, and a few without many citizens. But there were cemeteries with scores and hundreds of new graves—not of soldiers; and little toddling children who came up eagerly to you, saying, 'Mon père est mort; ma mère est morte.' They were distinguished from some of their playmates by this, you see!

And we had to hear—and endure—the stories, the myriad stories, of the relicts of Dinant, Visé, Tamines, Andennes, and all the rest. Of course, there were stories

exaggerated wilfully, and others exaggerated unintentionally, simply by the inevitable inaccuracies that come from excitement and mental stress. But there were stories that were true, all true.

If we had had but to make acquaintance this way with happenings of the days before we came! But there was no escape for us; the civilizing of Belgium did not cease with the terrible rush over the land to the final trench-lines in the West. It kept, and is keeping, everlastingly on. And we had to see it, and hear it, and feel it. We had to see the citizens of a proud and beautiful capital barred from walking in certain of its streets and parks, that elderly Landsturmers and *schneidige* boy officers might stroll and smoke there; and to be sent indoors to bed every night for a fortnight at eight o'clock to learn to be deferential and friendly to soldiers who had slain their relatives and friends, not in the heat of battle, but at cool dawn in front of stone-walls.

And we had to be there the fateful night of Nurse Cavell's death; and the days and nights of many other like deaths and travestied trials that preceded them. And we had to make the acquaintanceship of noble men and women, giving all the hours of all their days to the relief and encouragement of their people, only to have them disappear, carried off without an opportunity for a good-bye, for imprisonment in Germany, because of some trivial word or act of indignation at the sufferings of their people. Which carrying off brings us to the final word: *Deportations.*

There have been deportations of one kind or another from Belgium ever since the war began. Removal to Germany has been a punishment much favored by the German authorities for indiscreet or too uncomfortable Belgians. But most of these removals have been made of citizens singly or in small groups, usually after a military trial; and the official morn-

ing placards on the street walls have announced the alleged special reason for each removal and the particular period of years to be suffered by the victim in Germany. Or, rather, did until it seemed better—or worse for the friends—not to make any announcements at all.

But these removals are not what the world understands by deportations. The world knows hazily of the rapid gathering together and sending in large gangs to Germany—or to regions in occupied France near the west front—of thousands, tens of thousands, altogether a total of something more than one hundred thousand ablebodied Belgian men. With the exception of a few flax-workers from West Flanders, no women were sent away, as some sensational newspaper accounts have declared.

The world knows too, hazily, that these deportations were made in many, perhaps most, instances in a peculiarly brutal and revolting manner, with a treatment of

human beings comparable only with that which might have been given to an equal number of cattle, sheep, or swine driven to the railways, held in yards in the rain or sun for a cursory examination for possible infectious disease and physical condition generally—for the importers wanted only sound animals—and then packed tightly into box-cars with enough feed and water for the trip to the distant abattoirs—enough feed, that is, if the trains got through on schedule, which they never did.

The world knows this hazily, I say. Much has been written about this deporting; about its causes, the conditions that incited German authority to do it—it was the highest military authority that decreed it, not Von Bissing's Belgian government,—the manner of its doing, its results. But the world needs the whole story. Unfortunately it cannot yet be written. Among other things lacking is the knowledge of just how many of the

hundred thousand Belgian slaves have died and are to die in Germany. Some have been sent back hastily, so that they would not die in Germany; they die on the returning trains, or soon after they get back. Or, what is worse, some do not die, but continue to live, helpless physical wrecks.

The deportations were not hazy to us. They were the most vivid, shocking, convincing single happening in all our enforced observation and experience of German disregard of human suffering and human rights in Belgium. We did not see the things that happened to the deported men in Germany. But we could not help knowing some of them. When the wrecks began to be brought back—the starved and beaten men who would not sign the statements that they had voluntarily gone to Germany to work! and the starved and beaten ones who would not work at all; and the ones who could not work even when, driven by fear of pun-

ishment, they tried to, on the acorn soup and sawdust bread of the torture camps—when these poor wrecks came back, they brought their experiences with them, and revealed them by a few words and the simple exhibition of their scarred and emaciated bodies.

The deportations occurred near the end of the period of our stay in Belgium. They were the final and the fully sufficient exhibit, prepared by the great German Machine, to convince absolutely any one of us who might still have been clinging to his original desperately maintained attitude of neutrality, that it was high time that we were somewhere else—on the other side of the trench-line, by preference. There could be no neutrality in the face of the deportations; you are *for* that kind of thing, or you are *against* it.

We are against it; America is against it; most of the civilized nations are against it. That is the hope of the world.

A Belgian Record

A BELGIAN RECORD

In connection with the subject of the Belgian deportations, the following translation, made by Professor Kellogg, of a memorial sent to Governor-General von Bissing about December 1, 1916, by a group of prominent burghers of Antwerp, will be of interest. It is new to the American public.

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing, Governor of Belgium, in Brussels:

Your Excellency,

By virtue of an Order of the Military Governor of Antwerp, rendered in accordance with the instructions of the German General Government in Belgium, dated November 2, 1916, our citizens without work whose names are on the lists of the Registry Office (*Meldeamt*) are instructed

to present themselves immediately at the Southern Railway Station. From there they will be transported, by force if necessary, into Germany, where they will be compelled to take up work which will be assigned to them. The same measures have been taken in the rest of the country. Without having committed crime, and without trial, thousands of our free citizens are being thus deported, against their will, into an enemy land, far from their homes, far from their wives and their children. They are being submitted to that most terrible treatment for free men: being forced to labor as slaves.

We, Deputies, Senators, and notables of Antwerp and its environs, would believe ourselves recreant to all our duty if we allowed such things to occur under our eyes, without resorting to the right that we have of addressing the executive power under any circumstances, in order to make known to it our griefs and our protests.

By what right is this forced labor with deportation introduced into our unhappy country? We seek in vain for a response to this question. The Rights of the People condemn such a measure.

There is no modern author who justifies it. The articles of the Convention of The Hague, defining requisitions made for the benefit of an occupying army, are directly opposed to such a measure.

The constitutional right of all European countries, including Germany, is not less opposed to it.

The most illustrious of your sovereigns, Frederick the Second, has regarded and honored as a dogma, individual liberty and the right of every citizen to dispose of his capacities and of his work as he wishes. An occupying authority ought to respect these essential principles which have been the common patrimony of humanity for centuries.

It cannot be denied that the Belgian deported workers, under the conditions

created by this action, will set free a proportional number of German workers to go to the front to fight the brothers and sons of the deported Belgians. This makes them forced partakers in the war against our country, something that Article 52 of the Convention of The Hague prohibits in express terms. That is not all. Immediately after the occupation of Antwerp, thousands of our citizens had fled the country and taken refuge in that part of Holland stretching along the Belgian frontier, but the German authorities made most reassuring declarations to them.

On October 9th, 1914, General von Beseler, Commander-in-Chief of the besieging army, gave to negotiators from Contich a declaration stating: 'Unarmed members of the Civic Guard will not be considered as prisoners of war.'

Under the same date, Lieutenant-General von Schutz, the German Commander of the Fort of Antwerp, gave out

the following proclamation: 'The undersigned, Commander of the Fort of Antwerp, declares that nothing stands in the way of the return of inhabitants to their country. None of them will be molested; even the members of the Civic Guard, if they are unarmed, may return in all security.'

On the 16th of November, 1914, Cardinal Mercier communicated to the population a declaration signed by General Huene, Military Governor of Antwerp, in which the General said, for purposes of general publication: 'Young men have nothing to fear from being taken to Germany, either to be enrolled in the army or to be employed at forced labor.' A little later the eminent prelate requested Baron von der Goltz, Governor-General of Belgium, to ratify for the whole country, without limit as to time, these guaranties which General Huene has given for the Province of Antwerp. He was successful in obtaining this.

Finally, on the 18th of October, 1914, the military authorities of Antwerp gave a signed statement to the representative of General von Terwiega, Commander of the Holland Field Army, to the effect that the young Belgian men and unarmed members of the Belgian Civic Guard could return from Holland into Belgium and would not be molested. One of his sentences was: 'The rumor according to which the young Belgian men will be sent into Germany . . . is without any foundation.'

Upon the faith of these solemn public declarations, numerous citizens, not alone of Antwerp but of all parts of the country, have returned across the Holland-Belgium frontier to their own hearth-stones. Now these very men who, once free, returned to Belgium, relying upon the formal engagements of the German authorities, will be sent to-morrow into Germany, there to be forced to undertake that labor of slaves which it has been promised

would never be put upon them. Under these conditions, we believe it right to demand that the measures taken for these deportations be countermanded. We add that the agreement of Contich formally stipulated that the members of the Civic Guard would not be treated as prisoners of war. Surely, then, there can be no question of transferring them to Germany to give them a treatment even more severe.

The preamble of the Order for the deportation seems to reproach our workers with their idleness, and it invokes the needs of public order and regrets the increasing charges of public charity to take care of these men. We beg to remark to Your Excellency that, at the time of the entrance of the German armies into Belgium, there were in this country large stocks of raw materials whose transformation into manufactured articles would have occupied innumerable workers for a long time. But these stocks of raw

materials have been taken from us and carried to Germany.

There were factories completely equipped which could have been used to produce articles for exportation into neutral countries. But the machines and the tools of these factories have been sent to Germany.

Certainly it is true that our workers have refused work offered by the occupying authorities, because this work tended to assist these authorities in their military operations. Rather than win large wages at this price they have preferred to accept privation. Where is the patriot, where is the man of heart, who would not applaud these poor people for this dignity and this courage?

No reproach of idleness can really be made to our worker classes who, it is well known everywhere, are second to none in their ardor for work.

The Order refers in addition to the necessity of good order, and refers also to

the necessity of not allowing an increasing number of workless people to become a burden on the public charity.

Public order has never caused trouble. As to charitable assistance, it is true that millions of francs have been spent in charity since the beginning of the war, but, for the accomplishment of this immense effort of benevolence, nothing has been asked from the German government, nor even from the Belgian Treasury, administered under your control and fed by our taxes. There should be, then, no anxiety on the part of Germany concerning this money, which in no way comes from it. Indeed, Your Excellency well knows that this money does not even come from immediate public charity, but is arranged for by the Comité National, which will continue to arrange for it in the future, as it has in the past.

None, then, of the motives invoked to support the Order of deportations seems to us to have any foundation.

One would seek in vain in all the history of war for a precedent for this action. Neither in the wars of the Revolution, nor of the Empire, nor in any which have since that time desolated Europe, has anyone struck at the sacred principle of the individual liberty of the non-combatant and peaceful populations.

Where will one stop in this war, if reasons of State can justify such treatment? Even in the colonies forced labor exists no longer.

Therefore, we pray Your Excellency to take into consideration all that we have just said, and to return to their homes those unfortunates who have already been sent into Germany in accordance with the Order of November 2, 1916.

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